

I have the privilege of serving as the Ranking Member on the Ways & Means Subcommittee on Health. In my position I consistently see how rising health care costs are affecting millions of Americans – individuals and families, as well as employers and the government. It's estimated that over 45 million Americans lack health insurance at any given time, and many more are fearful of losing their coverage if they have to switch jobs or move to a different state. According to one recent study, the total cost of health care will double over the next ten years to consume over one fifth of the U.S. economy.

In order to improve access to health insurance, I believe we must address the underlying cost of health care services. The most effective way to do this is to give patients and their doctors more control over their health care, rather than allowing third parties like insurers or the government to decide who gets care. In addition, we need to promote the use of innovative technologies and new ways of delivering health care. Innovation is a proven way to reduce the cost of goods and services, yet too often, well-intentioned actions by Congress have the effect of stifling promising new medical technologies. Finally, our legal system is a major factor in driving up the cost of health care. I believe we need a more rational way of settling medical malpractice disputes so doctors are not forced to perform unnecessary and costly procedures simply because they fear a lawsuit.

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